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Message Text

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16
ACTION NEA-12

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SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 OMB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /149 W
---------- 020111
R 191532Z MAR 74
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1893
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
USINT DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1616

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR IS AU XT
SUBJ: VISIT TO ISRAEL BY SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION

SUMMARY. IN COURSE OF SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION VISIT TO ISRAEL MARCH 14-16. AUSTRIAN CHANCELLOR KRCISKY AND OTHERS GIVE GOI LEADERS THEIR IMPRESSIONS OF CURRENT MOD IN EGYPT AND SYRIA. DELEGATION ALSO REPORTED NEGATIVE IMPRESSIONS OF PLO LEADERSHIP. VISIT PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY FOR IMPROVEMENT OF AUSTRIAN/ISRAELI RELATIONS AFTER CLOSING OF SCHOENAU TRANSIT FACILITIES FOR SOVIET JEWS LAST OCTOBER. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING ANALYSIS OFSOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION VISITIS BASED ON PRESS SOURCES AS WELL AS CONVERSATIONS WITH SEVERAL OBSERVERS AT MEETINGS, INCLUDING BRITISH EMBASSY SOURCE.

2. SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION HEADED BY AUSTRIAN CHAN-CELLOR KREISKY DEPARTED ISRAEL MARCH 16 AFTER THREE DAY VISIT HERE. MAIN PURPOSE OF VISIT WAS TO BRIEF ISRAELIS ON IMPRESSIONS RECEIVED BY DELEGATION AFTER MEETINGS WITH SADAT, ASAD, ARAFAT AND OTHERS.
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3. VISIT ITSELF WAS MINOR POLITICAL EVENT, WITH DELEGATION SPECIFICALLY ESCHEWING ANY INTENTION OF ACTING AS NEGOTIATOR BETWEEN ARABS AND ISRAELIS. HOWEVER, IT PROVIDED ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ISRAELIS TO HEAR FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES THEIR IMPRESSION OF NEW TURN IN EGYPTIAN POLICY. KREISKY SAID THAT EGYPT SEEMED INTENT ON REFURBISHING ITS ECONOMY AND MOVING AWAY FROM STATE OF CONSTANT WAR. MRS MEIR COMMENTED THAT MOST ENCOURAGING ASPECT OF DELEGATION'S REPORTWAS MESSAGE THAT EGYPTIANS SAY THEY NEED PEACE.

4. ON SYRIA KREISKY TOLD ISRAELIS THAT HE FOUND COUNTRY "ALMOST IN A STATE OF WAR," AND DELEGATES GENERALLY EXPRESSED THEIR SHOCK OVER HARDLINE MILITANCY OF SYRIAN LEADERSHIP.

5. KREISKY ALSO SOUNDED OUT GOI VIEW ON ESTABLISHMENT OF AND INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE IN CONTEXT OF OVERALL PEACE SETTLEMENT. MRS. MEIR REITERATED HER WELL KNOWN OBJECTIONS, SAYING THAT PALESTINIAN STATE BETWEEN JORDAN AND ISRAEL WOULD BE "ANTI-STATE" WHOSEMAIN PURPOSE WOULD BE AS BASE TO ATTACK ISRAEL.

6. DELEGATIONTOLD ISRAELIS THAT IT WAS DISTINCTLY UNIMPRESSED WITH YASSAR ARAFAT AS WELL AS OTHER POL FIGURES THAT THEY HAD MET, FINDING THEM HARDLINEAND INFLEXIBLE.

7. COMMENT. VISIT HEALED EMBRYONIC RIFT BETWEEN ISRAELI LABOR PARTY AND SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL. GOI INITIALLY HAD BEEN MIFFED BECAUSE DELEGATION HAD DECIDED TO BYPASS ISRAEL ON GROUNDS THAT TIES BETWEEN ISRAELI LABOR PARTY AND OTHER MEMBERS OF SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL MADE VISIT HERE UNNECESSARY. ISRAELIS ALSO HAD MISGIVINGS OVER KREISKY'S ROLE AS LEADER OF DELEGATION GENERATED BY MEMORIES OF CLOSURE OF SCHOENAU CAMP LAST FALL UNDER PRESSURE FROM PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS AND SUBSEQUENT CLASH BETWEEN KREISKY AND PRIMIN MEIR OVER INCIDENT. GOI MADE GREAT EFFORT TO MAKE VISIT GO SMOOTHLY AND PARTICULARLY NOTE TO CAUSE EMBARRASSMENT OR DIFFICULTIES FOR CHANCELLOR KREISKY.

8. IN SUME, VISIT CONFIRMED EXISTING ISRAELI IMPRESSIONS OF CURRENT EGYPTIAN MODERATION AND SYRIAN INTRANSIGENCE, BUT APPARENTLY HAD LITTLE OTHER IMPACT. ATMOSPHERICS WERE GOOD, HOWEVER, AND WE BELIEVE THAT KREISKY MADE FAVORABLE
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IMPRESSION ON HIS ISRAELI HOSTS, EVEN REDUCING SOME OF THE TENSION WHICH HAS EXISTED BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND ISRAEL SINCE LAST OCTOBER.
KEATING

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